

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Television is a very powerful communication tool, and for Sinclair to use the public airwaves as a political tool to sway public opinion is an abuse of the public process. Equal airtime rules have been put in place in an attempt to prevent an unfair advantage in the media manipulation of the political process. In this case, Sinclair is trying to get around being fair.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process is a serious issue that should also hold companies accountable to serve EVERYONE's public interest.

Thank you.